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County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
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November 29, 2005

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From: David Sanders, Ph.D. 
Director

MAY 24, 2005 BOARD AGENDA ITEM #27-B AND NOVEMBER 1, 2005 BOARD AGENDA ITEM #3: CONCURRENT PLANNING REDESIGN PILOT

INTRODUCTION

On May 24, 2005, in a response to a motion by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, the Board instructed the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services to report back to the Board within 180 days on the status of the Department's Concurrent Planning Redesign (CPR) pilot and the feasibility of expanding the pilot countywide.

On November 1, 2005, in a response to a motion by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, the Board instructed the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services to work in conjunction with the Chief Administrative Officer to identify and allocate resources, both within and outside of the current Department budget, in order to further expand the Permanency Partners Program (P3); to support the countywide roll-out of the CPR through additional staff; and to report back to the Board on its findings on November 24, 2005.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

One of the major goals of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is to decrease timelines to permanency for children in out-of-home care. Two pilot programs that have displayed success in this area are CPR and the P3. The Department-wide expansion of CPR and P3 is designed to continue the reduction of the number of children in Long Term Foster Care, increase the number of children reunified and exiting care to a legally permanent home, and decrease the time it takes for a child to be reunified or adopted.

The goal of CPR is to reunify children with their families safely and timely. However when children cannot safely be returned to their parents, CPR is designed to ensure the alternative permanent plan of legal permanency is achieved as soon as possible. CPR has been piloted in five DCFS offices with a focus on reunifying more quickly and reducing the time it takes to achieve adoption and legal guardianship. The proportion of cases within the pilot offices with the recommendation of alternate legal permanency has steadily increased since pilot inception. Children referred for adoptive planning has increased an average of 146 per month in the first 9 months of 2005 as compared to the first 9 months of 2004. The number of children being recommended for an alternative permanent plan of Long Term Foster Care has decreased significantly from over 19% per month to 4.5% per month in the Department overall.

P3 will allow DCFS to aggressively address the approximately 7,000 children, 12 years old and older, in Long Term Foster Care without a legally permanent plan. Since the inception of the P3 pilot on October 13, 2004, the pilot has grown from a one-office, 50-youth operation to serving over 300 youth in 17 offices throughout the County, with successful resolution underway for nearly one-third of these youth. As a result of DCFS' emphasis on the importance of a legally permanent family for each child, comprehensive Permanency Initiative Plans have been developed in each office. The P3 program is a major component of each of these plans.

It is imperative to maintain a continued sense of urgency around the critical issue of achieving legal permanency for every child. To accomplish this, both the CPR and P3 programs need to be expanded and available to every child in foster care. Through increased staffing in CPR and P3, DCFS will realize continued increases of children reunified and in legally permanent homes.

CURRENT STATUS

The following is the status of the CPR and P3 Pilots:

Concurrent Planning Redesign (CPR)

1. CPR has been piloted in five (5) offices, as follows: Lakewood (March 21, 2005), Belvedere (April 6, 2005), Covina (May 16, 2005), Compton (June 1, 2005) and North Hollywood (June 27, 2005). These offices serve 35.2% of all Department open cases (as of November 1, 2005).
2. Court delays due to improper notification have decreased in the pilot offices, further supporting the goal of decreasing timelines to permanency.
3. Integral to the CPR, a web-based tracking system, Concurrent Planning Permanency Log (CPPL) has been developed and is in use.
4. CPR protocols and reference guides have been developed and are posted on the Department's Intranet, LAKids.
5. Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) committees have been trained and established in each pilot office to oversee and support the rollout of CPR.
6. A distinct labor/management body, Continuous Improvement Process (CIP), has been created to provide oversight and assess CPR progress.

Permanency Partners Program (P3)

1. P3 has been implemented in all seventeen (17) regional offices, with one or more Permanency Partners assigned to each office.
2. Permanency Partner Services are being provided by three separate entities: Department retirees hired on 120-day contracts, and two contracted partners – the Consortium for Children and the Community College Foundation.
3. Over 300 youth have been paired with Permanency Partners throughout the County to date, resulting in 29% having an identified plan of returning home, adoption, legal guardianship or mentorship.

RESOURCES NEEDED FOR EXPANSION

Additional staffing resources totaling 330 (283 new items and 47 items converted from temporary to permanent) have been identified as required for expanding the CPR and P3 pilots countywide as follows:

1. Based on current caseload numbers, 235 additional staff are needed to expand CPR countywide: 154 Children's Social Workers (CSW), 25 Supervising Children's Social Workers (SCSW), 2 Assistant Regional Administrators (ARA), 5 Children's Services Administrator I (CSA I), 15 Adoption Assistants functioning as Permanency Assistants, 1 Senior Typist Clerk (STC), 31 Intermediate Typist Clerks (ITC), and 2 Secretaries. Of the total staff required, expanding into 6 additional offices through the remainder of Fiscal Year 05/06 will require 156 of these staff as follows: 98 CSW's, 14 SCSW's, 2 ARA's, 5 CSA I's, 14 Adoption Assistants functioning as Permanency Assistants, 1 STC, 20 ITC's, and 2 Secretaries.
2. Based on the demand for further assistance in promoting legal permanency for the over 7,000 older youth in Long Term Foster Care, 48 additional staff are needed to expand P3 in Fiscal Year 05/06, and to continue this staffing through Fiscal Year 06/07. Staffing increases are as follows: 39 (part time) CSW's, 6 (part-time) SCSW's, 1 Children Services Administrator II (CSA II), 1 CSA I, and 1 STC. In addition, 47 existing P3 items will be converted from temporary to permanent.

IDENTIFICATION AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES, BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE CURRENT DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES BUDGET, IN ORDER TO FURTHER EXPAND THE PERMANENCY PARTNERS PROGRAM (P3) AND SUPPORT THE COUNTYWIDE ROLLOUT OF THE CONCURRENT PLANNING REDESIGN THROUGH ADDITIONAL STAFF

The Department of Children and Family Services and the Chief Administrative Office continue to confer on identifying and allocating resources to expand P3 and support the countywide rollout of CPR. The consensus is that this determination will be completed by the end of December 2005. Accordingly, the Department will report to the Board within 60 days regarding the identification and allocation of resources.

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If you have any questions please call me, or your staff may contact Helen Berberian,
Manager, Board Relations Section at (213) 351-5530.

DS:TP:ns

- c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors